

✱ The Kitchen Garden. ✱

CELERY AND HOW TO GROW IT.



“CELL begun—half done!” Good plants are indispensable to a good beginning. To insure having them just when soil, season and hands are ready, and the weather favorable, they should be grown at home—a task by no means difficult.

To grow the plants, procure good seed from a reliable source. As early in spring as the condition of the ground will permit, prepare a smooth, mellow seed-bed in any convenient spot where the soil is rich and reasonably free from weed seeds. Mineral manures make firm, stiff plants; hence wood ashes and phosphatic fertilizers, applied broadcast and thoroughly raked in, are preferable to even the best compost with its probable weed seed supply.

Mark out drills not more than one-half inch deep, and not less than ten inches apart, and scatter the seed in them evenly, like sowing carrots. *Do not cover*, but walk over each row, putting the heel of one foot just ahead of the toe of the other, thus stepping upon every inch of row with his full weight, and pressing the seed firmly into the soil. The natural moisture of the ground insures prompt germination under this treatment; and the application of a light mulch of litter, practised by some, though perhaps beneficial in a few cases, yet, as a rule, proves superfluous. Allow no weeds to grow, and keep the soil well pulverized between the rows *all the time*, loose soil being a perfect mulch. Repeated light dressings of nitrate of soda are of wonderful help. Thin where too thick, leaving about fifty plants to the rod. If tops grow rank, shear them back once or twice to make stocky plants.

I practise sowing a few rows of celery in my vegetable garden at the same time and in the same manner that I sow my early vegetables; and there, all receive the same treatment. The rows are frequently cultivated with either Ruhlman's wheel hoe or Gregory's finger weeder, and weeded by hand as often as required. Thus I raise a row of celery plants about as cheaply as one of cabbage plants or radishes. The same length of row produces nearly twice as many celery plants as it would cabbage plants, and the former are worth twice as much money.

There are few localities where a limited number of good celery plants would not find ready sale at 50 cents per hundred. This pays exceedingly well, and often more than the production of marketable celery. Hence these minute directions.

Growing the crop from good plants is comparatively easy. If not grown at